



AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Claims 1-14. (Canceled)

15. (Currently Amended) A surgical [An] instrument adapted to fix a portion of a beating [part] heart by applying a negative pressure thereto, said surgical instrument comprising:

a member adapted to contact the portion of the beating heart, said member having [at least one] a plurality of suction [port] ports adapted to deliver the negative pressure to the portion of the beating heart, [at least one] suction [line] for connecting said [at least one] suction [port] ports to a source of negative pressure, and [a] suction [aperture] apertures interconnecting [each] said [at least one] suction [port] ports, respectively, with said [at least one] suction [line], wherein each said suction aperture has a cross-sectional area substantially smaller than a cross-sectional area of said respective suction port with which it connects and smaller than a cross-sectional area of said suction with which it connects.

16. (Canceled)

17. (Canceled) Please cancel claim 17 without prejudice to the possibility of filing one or more continuing applications directed to the subject matter recited therein.

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18. (Canceled)

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19. (Canceled) Please cancel claim 19 without prejudice to the possibility of filing one or more continuing applications directed to the subject matter recited therein.

Claims 20-25. (Canceled)

26. (Currently Amended) A suction member for fixing a portion of a beating [part] heart by applying a negative pressure through said suction member, said suction member comprising a body having a surface configured to engage the portion of the beating heart, [at least one] a plurality of suction [port] ports having a distal opening through said surface and adapted to engage the surface of the beating heart, a suction aperture fluidly connected to each said suction port, and a suction conduit

passing within said body and fluidly connecting with each said suction aperture, said suction conduit being in fluid communication with a source of negative pressure; each said suction aperture having a cross-sectional area smaller than a cross sectional area of said suction conduit.

27. (Canceled) Please cancel claim 27 without prejudice to the possibility of filing one or more continuing applications directed to the subject matter recited therein.

28. (Canceled)

29. (Currently Amended) A suction arrangement for a surgical instrument adapted for fixation of a portion of a beating heart, said arrangement comprising:

a first suction port having first and second ends, said first end being open to fluid flow therethrough, said second end connected to a suction aperture having a smaller cross-sectional area than a cross-sectional area of said first end, and a suction conduit connected to said suction aperture, said suction conduit being adapted to connect with a source of negative pressure; said suction conduit having a larger cross-sectional area than said cross-sectional area of said suction aperture; and

a second suction port having first and second ends, said first end being open to fluid flow therethrough, said second end of said second suction port connected to a second suction aperture having a smaller cross-sectional area than a cross-sectional area of said first end of said second suction port, and the suction conduit being connected to said second suction aperture, said suction conduit having a larger cross-sectional area than said cross-sectional area of said second suction aperture .

30. (Canceled) Please cancel claim 30 without prejudice to the possibility of filing one or more continuing applications directed to the subject matter recited therein.

Claims 31-32 (Canceled)

33. (Previously Added) The suction member of claim 26, wherein said surface is substantially flat.

34. (Previously Added) The suction member of claim 26, wherein said surface is contoured to engage a curved surface of the heart.